

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 82.

SATURDAY, JULY 22, 1865.

PRICE 1½d.

BEAUTIFUL FOR EVER.

'A thing of beauty,' sings John Keats, 'is a joy for ever;' but he ought to have added, in the interest of stern veracity, 'as long as it lasts.' My lady's 'nimbus of golden hair,' so dwelt upon by the sensation novelist, is surely less of 'a joy' both to herself and others when it has grown gray and scant; her teeth of 'dazzling whiteness' delight us less, when they are stopped with gold, and auxiliated by the hippopotamus; her peach-like complexion fails to ravish our souls when the bloom is laid on with the (however artistic) finger.

I am not beautiful myself, but I very much admire those who are, and take great interest in their well-being. If I knew of any individual who would undertake to make plain persons handsome, I would cheerfully pay him what I could afford to effect the transformation. But the ambition or audacity of the physical regenerators of our race have not as yet reached this stage. In the meantime, I study with pleasure the ingenious methods by which they profess to render the comely 'beautiful for ever.' I wonder if there is anything in it at all—whether those advertising folks who promise hair, and teeth, and colour, are all impostors alike, and can do nothing for one, or whether they have really something upon which to found their gigantic pufferies. A man of genuine science, who lately wrote upon the subject of human hair, asserts that no amount of grease, pomade, or oil in any combination can save one hair from falling off our head, if it be so minded; that the causes of baldness are far too deeply seated to be affected even by metallic combs, and that nothing is to be done for the most solicitous beyond selling them a wig. If this be the case, the hairdressers must surely be aware of it, and pursue a life of duplicity calculated to turn their hair gray in spite of *Walnut Extract*. For, only consider how universal is their habit of lying. Even the most old-fashioned of barbers, who prides himself upon not employing a rotatory machine, and who knows nothing of 'haircutting upon the Oxford and Cambridge systems,' will assure you, in an unctuous

whisper, that a pot of Circassian Cream is all you want to arrest—'ahem' (here he coughs behind his greasy palm), 'we are getting a leetle thin, sir, just atop of the 'ed. The Cream effectually cures this, besides strengthening the 'air when fine and weak.' People who believe in things simply because they are old-fashioned—a faith that secures a livelihood to many a dull rogue—have some confidence in the fellow's advertised statement of 'a bear lately killed.' But is it likely that this man should have a bear—and a polar bear, to judge by its portrait—invoiced to him every six weeks or so? Would there not be a tremendous local sensation with every periodical arrival of such an animal? Would not the boys in the neighbourhood get the same mysterious warning which they receive concerning all other public events, of the date of Bruin's arrival, and crowd the little street from end to end? Without doubt, that statement about the arctic visitor is a lie of the first magnitude; but then Mr Barber's Circassian Cream is only a shilling a pot, and 'really almost equal'—he confesses this when he knows that you will not go so far as the half-crown's worth of Bruin's fat—'really almost equal to bear's grease.'

The modern perruquier is a very different sort of person. A delicious fragrance expressed from every flower that blows, and from a good many things that are by no means flowers, pervades his Emporium, at the back of which is the 'Laboratory.' The bear has disappeared from his windows; undisturbed by this gentleman's emissaries, that animal may slumber upon the iceberg, after supping upon the Esquimaux. But there is a dull roaring throughout the Establishment, which reminds one of his voice when in captivity. This is caused by the working of the engines—generally a boy who turns a handle—in the realms beneath, and by the revolution of the hair-brushes above. In the cutting-room of Mr Perruquier—so different in its mirrors and gilding from Mr B's cheerless and unadorned apartment, with its little strip of carpet—india-rubber ropes are suspended over every victim, and instruments like very large pipe-cleaners or very small Turks-head brooms, are

made thereby to revolve around their heads. Altogether, it is a solemn sight; and what is still more calculated to excite the awe of the unscientific, a number of apparently headless persons are distributed about the room. These are the torsos of customers who are immersed in mighty basins full of egg-flip—or what looks exceedingly like it—and are undergoing the process of being 'shampooed.' So little have some people to do, that persons are found to undergo this rite once a fortnight, and to contract for the whole operation of cutting and cleansing by the year; and if you should follow them to their private residences, you would probably learn how those big bottles of *Hair Fluids* and *Unique Extracts*, and *Aqua Amarilla*, 'the greatest and most useful invention of the day,' get disposed of, and whither—shut up in wooden boxes, and sealed with the most elaborate caution—they find their way. For the Culture of the Hair is a wide-spread worship, although the devotees do not make open profession of their faith. Amid the buzz of wheels and the soft whir of the brush, the still small voice of the operator is heard with his '*Cantharides Ile*, sir, would do your 'ed a great deal of good; only three-and-six, or sent by post for four-and-eight'; or, 'If you would use *Registered Golden Ile*— Beg pardon, sir, didn't know you objected to iles—if you would but give a trial to the *Neoline 'air-wash* at seven-and-six, or packed for the country at eight-and-six.'

Or perhaps you have got a mole under your eye, which partial friends have informed you is rather an addition to your good looks than otherwise, or, at all events, is an omen of wealth.

'A few applications of the *Depilatory*, at three-and-six, or, sent by post for fifty-four stamps, would remove this little defect, sir;' or, 'The *Roseate Powder*, at four shillings, or, in double packets, at seven shillings, or by post— Well, sir, I only mentioned it, meaning no offence; but, for the removal of superfluous 'air, there is nothing like it.'

Think of spending seven shillings upon a mole! It should be a sign of wealth indeed to justify such extravagance, and yet I protest that it is difficult to resist these insidious appeals of the White-aproned one. He has you in his power, and by the sudden application of the rotatory machinery, might do you some dreadful injury. I can imagine a weak-minded person, dazed by the wheel-music, and terrified by what has been told him about his personal disfigurement, trying everything that has been recommended, and applying the *Aqua Amarilla*, or 'Nothing Impossible,' to his mole, and the *Depilatory* to his head and cheeks. Then, lo! in the morning he would awake bald and whiskerless, while his Mole would have assumed portentous and bush-like proportions, and even borne some wondrous fruit. Or, on the other hand, would neither have made 'a ha'porth of difference?' This is the question which I should like to have answered, for I have a mole myself.

Again, with respect to the *Damask Rose-drops*, spoken of so highly in the (advertising columns of

the) *Times*, would they really 'give instant, permanent colour and beauty to my cheeks, lips, and complexion, impart the radiant bloom of youth, and defy the closest observer? In pocket-cases for three-and-six'— But here we will stay a moment, since we can afford to do it—for how greatly is the value of Time decreased when we can arrest his ravages at this low figure!—to inquire why three-and-six should be the exact sum for which almost every one of these blessings is to be purchased? Is there any magic in seven sixpences, that Youth and Beauty and a Head of Hair should be procurable for that precise amount? Couldn't the thing possibly be done so low as three-and-four? With bated breath, I ventured, upon one occasion, to ask this question of a Master-spirit of the Art of Beautifying; but he only replied evasively, that 'Of course there was a reduction upon taking a quantity.'

Some of these regenerators of the Human Appearance seem to despise the aid of Magical Preparations altogether. '*Does your Hair fall off?*—If so, consult Mrs Jones, who guarantees to prevent it in 48 hours by her improved system of hair-cutting.' Now, this is extraordinary, from its very simplicity. Of course, if she cuts *all* one's hair off, she will effectually prevent it from falling away, just as you might insure the most plethoric person from apoplexy by giving him a dose of strychnine. But why should she take eight-and-forty hours about it? Does she use *tweez*— But no; this subject cannot be pursued. I have not the least doubt that this lady is a most skilful and accomplished perruquier; only, I do wish she would be either more or less explicit in her advertisements; at present, they curdle the blood.

Another programme for the toilet in the present sheet of the *Times* (and every one of the examples adduced appear in a single copy of that paper) is also essentially practical. '*White and soft Hands throughout the winter.*—The London Soap and Candle Company beg strongly to recommend, &c. &c.' The prose-poet of this establishment seems to be incapable of a prolonged flight of panegyric; but then the *Winter Skin Soap*, of which it is his mission to sing, is only a shilling a pound.

The Hair-dyers, again, do not trust so much to laudation of their own wares as to depreciating those of their rivals. Thus, next to the '*Walnut Extract*, which restores gray hair to its natural [?] colour, and darkens red or light hair without staining the skin,' we have the '*Instantaneous Liquid Dye*, so totally different from those walnut pomades and other dyes, which only dirty the hair, and require daily application;' while immediately afterwards, Professor White informs us that *his* dye is 'the only one extant that will produce a natural black or brown, and is also free from smell.' Amid these contradictory statements, I pause bewildered, with hair which only my best friends call auburn, not knowing what remedy to apply, or whose experience to consult; although, as to the latter, the military are evidently the class to be

appealed to, for have we not the *Guards' Hair-dye*, and another 'invaluable preparation which no officer or gentleman should be without.'

It will be observed that in these *Elegant Extracts* I have borrowed nothing from our old acquaintance, *Macassar*, the application of which 'fragrant and pellucid oil, in reference to' the hair of childhood, is attended with the happiest effects, and renders unnecessary the use of the fine comb, and which 'in all climates displays alike its incomparable results, and has long been an established favourite in India. Ask for *Macassar Oil*.' Neither have I mentioned that '*Oriental Botanical Preparation*' called by the vulgar *Rowland's Kalydor*, which 'obviates all the effects of climate on the skin, whether with reference to' cold and inclemency, or intense solar heat, and is in high repute from the sultry climes of India to the frozen realms of the Czar. Beware of spurious and pernicious articles under the name of *Kalydor*.' To have omitted these, would have been a grave offence; but should I have forgotten *Madame Rachel*, in a paper treating of such subjects, that would have been playing the play of *Hamlet* indeed with the part of—let us say *Ophelia* for a change—left out. Her advertisement is unique in its way—confident in assertion, trenchant in denunciation, and yet with a certain airy grace about it not commonly found united with such intensity.

MADAME RACHEL takes this opportunity to state that the secret of her beautiful and delicate art of ENAMELLING has descended from generation to generation of her family—therefore all other persons presuming to style themselves enamellers commit a gross fraud on the public at large, which has been proved beyond a doubt.

This I like, for it shews the lady to be a person of spirit; but it does not tell me all that I want to know. If I wish to be made beautiful—I cautiously abstain from saying 'to get enamelled'—what steps am I to take? I learn from another advertisement in another place, that 'the following articles are those for which *Madame Rachel* has the greatest demand:—

ALABASTER POWDER, Royal Arabian Soap, Alabaster Liquid, Circassian Bloom, Circassian Preparation for the Eyes, Liquid Arab Bloom, Arab Bloom and Arab Bloom Powder, Magnetic Rock Dew Water from Sahara, Magnetic Cream, Circassian and Arabian Oils for the Hair, Medicated and Preservative Balm, Enamel Powder for the Teeth, Blanchinette Enamel Wash, Albanian Powder, Albanian Cream Powder, Armenian Powder, Pure Extracts of the Lilies, Pure Extracts of the China Rose, Alabaster Cream, Favourite of the Harem's Pearl White, Sultana's Cream, Choicest Perfumes of Arabia, Armenian Liquid for Removing Wrinkles, Circassian Beauty Wash.

Here is a great choice of beautifying materials, but I cannot help observing, that our old friend Mr Barber's Circassian Cream appears among them, although in another guise, suspiciously often. Why should so much that is good for our appearance come from Circassia, and all the rest from Arabia, Albania, and Armenia? Observe, I throw no doubt upon the fact, but only inquire, from simple curiosity, why should there not be a Putney Bloom, a Turnham Green Preservative Balm, or even a

Camden Town Preparation for the Chin? Why, in the name of native produce and British industry, should I not grow Medicated Balm in a box outside my window, like *Mignonette*?

Nay, supposing that the superiority of these far-fetched elixirs is admitted, how am I to apply them, and how often, and how long? Is there no literary work that undertakes to shew me in detail how—not I, but somebody who is Beautiful to begin with, is to render him (or her) self *Beautiful for Ever*? There is. A little book with that very title is vended at *Madam R.'s* magic establishment, which professes—or suggests that it professes—to supply this information; and I have bought it, although it cost me half-a-crown. Two-and-sixpence for a pamphlet of four-and-twenty pages of largish print, would be rather dear, if it only treated of politics or polemics; but for the secret of *Eternal Youth*, it is by no means a high figure. The third page (for there is no first or second) is devoted to Women generally; the fourth is dedicated to the Queen; the fifth is occupied with the Princess Royal and the Princess Alice; the sixth speaks very highly of the Princess of Wales; the seventh commends Miss Nightingale, and casually alludes to *Jessie Maclean*, the heroine of Lucknow; the eighth commemorates the virtues of *Grace Darling* and of some poor ballet-girl whose clothes caught fire at a theatre; the ninth and three following pages resume the general eulogy upon womankind; and the thirteenth and fourteenth are wholly taken up with a quotation from the *Illustrated London News*. We have only ten pages, therefore, for our money, devoted to the Secret of *Eternal Youth*. The fifteenth and sixteenth pages themselves do not even at once enter upon this desirable subject, but are mainly occupied with certain wrongs which the great Enameller has suffered at the hands of justice in connection with the beautifying of a lady's complexion. 'Let it not, however,' says she, 'be for a moment supposed that we would presume to act the part of censors. . . . The act of injustice of the one has been amply compensated for by the generosity of others; and we trust we may be pardoned when we apply to ourselves the royal and sacred motto, "God and my right." This is affecting, but it does not help me, so far as I can see, to be Beautiful for Ever. This, nevertheless, may be owing to my own obtuseness, for the pamphleteer proceeds: 'If we do not tire the patience of our gentle readers, we will further explain our process, as shewn in the treatment of women and children.' In page seventeen, we get a hint of the matter in hand for the first time. 'It' [the beautifying] 'is principally accomplished by the use of the Arabian Bath, composed of pure extracts of the liquid of flowers, choice and rare herbs, and other preparations equally harmless and efficacious.' Page eighteen, however, relapses into the general eulogy of womankind. Page nineteen is devoted to the denunciation of rival establishments: 'The author, who had the honour of supplying and arranging the elegant cabinet toilet to the Sultana, the jewels of which were supplied by Emanuel of Hanover Square; who has been especially appointed by the Empress Eugenie and the Court of France as sole importer of Arabian perfumes and toilet requisites—fac-similes of which were presented in golden vases to the Empress Eugenie by the ladies of Paris, under the name of the Senses of Peace; whose talents have been appreciated by the crowned heads

* If the same gentleman of letters did not compose both the advertisements in which this same happy phrase occurs, I will swallow a bottle of either mixture.

of Europe, the aristocracy and the nobility, as the greatest restorer and preserver in the world of female grace and loveliness—the author begs leave to suggest to her fair readers that they cannot be too careful in avoiding the dangerous cosmetics vended by unprincipled persons, who are regardless of the injurious effects to the complexion.

At page twenty, we learn at last the reason why the great Enameller surveys from such a pinnacle all other professors of the same calling. 'Having, at an enormous expense, completed the purchase and sole right of the Magnetic Rock Dew Water of Sahara, which possesses the extraordinary property of increasing the vital energies—restores the colour of gray hair—gives the appearance of youth to persons far advanced in years, and removes wrinkles, defects, and blemishes, from whatever cause they may arise, she trusts that the resources at her command will be a sufficient guarantee to her fair readers, should they deem her too presumptuous in extolling her beautiful art.'

This is so far satisfactory: but with respect to the virtues of the Magnetic Rock Dew Water of Sahara, we have absolutely no evidence whatever, except the before-mentioned 'Extract of Illustrated London News.' Thereby we learn that in the interior of the Great Desert is a magnetic rock, wherefrom a water distils, sparingly, in the form of dew, which appears to have extraordinary properties, since it restores the colour of gray hair, and gives the appearance of youth to persons of considerable antiquity. This precious liquid, we are told, 'is brought to Morocco on swift dromedaries for the use of the Court'—or rather, it used to be so, before Madame Rachel deprived them of the luxury, by purchasing the monopoly of it. 'If,' says she, 'the respectability of this excellent newspaper is not a sufficient guarantee'—although we do not ourselves see how that publication is pledged to the assertion—'if further proofs be needed, the ambassadors from the Court of Morocco can testify to the Magnetic Rock's existence.' I venture to think, however, that this is not quite the point. In vain I seek through the remainder of this expensive pamphlet for plain directions how to make one's self Beautiful for Ever. The last four pages are occupied with nothing particular, except that, at the very end, there appears this intimation: 'In our next, we will endeavour to explain our theory, with advice, and every necessary instruction, concerning the restoration and preservation of female loveliness, with recipes for the same.'

In our next? Why, until this dread and disappointing moment, there has not been a hint that the purchase of another half-crown pamphlet was expected of us. Upon the title-page is nothing to inform us that this admirable volume is only the first of a series! The date, too, is 1863—surely between it and 1865 is a longer interval than usual to elapse in the publication of a periodical! It may be that a second work has appeared, unknown to the present writer. It may be that the Secret of Eternal Youth has been meanwhile confided to tens of thousands—but if it has, it has been better kept than most secrets, for I have never heard a whisper of it.

I have nothing whatever to say against Enamelling, although I understand the process takes more time than a man of business like myself can spare for it. Still less do I object to the Arabian Bath, which Madame Rachel informs us—I have no doubt with truth—is very superior to the Turkish;

while my disposition is much too reverent to question for a moment the virtues of the Magnetic Rock Dew Water of Sahara. On the contrary, I do most earnestly hope that the results of these respective elixirs are more satisfactory than the literature of which they are the subject. Otherwise, if the Magnetic Rock Dew Water of Sahara costs the same price as this pamphlet—that is, if it be retailed at half-a-crown a bottle, and I understand that it is quite that price—I shall consider it dear.

OUT TRAWLING.

A ROMAN emperor advertised for a new pleasure, and as no one had the wit at that period to think of tobacco, I believe that he had to content himself with the stale and insipid amusements of feeding his lampreys with slaves, and cutting fat senators in two; but to many a modern aspirant after satisfactory sport, I flatter myself that I am giving a useful hint when I say: 'Go out trawling.'

I speak not so much to men who have plenty of time and money, and can seek health-giving sport on the loch, the moor, the stubble, and at the cover-side; I rather address that more numerous class whose annual summer holiday is spent with their families at the sea-side, and who are well-nigh bored to death before it is half over. I was exactly in that position myself last August. I had bathed; but one is not a fish, and cannot swim about for ever: I had put into raffles; but one must be a fearful gambler to find any great delight in spending shillings on the chance of winning utterly useless articles: I had walked on the pier, and found it as dreary an operation as walking anywhere else: I had tried to read a novel, but my lodgings were uninhabitably hot in the daytime—and how people can read in the open air, with the glare of the sun making all the letters prismatic, and the wind blowing the leaves about, is a marvel: I had looked at the vessels in the offing through a telescope, but they were much the same as when seen closer with the naked eye. There was nothing left but to lounge on the promenade, listen to the band, and admire the young ladies; but what is the music of a brass band when you always hear the same airs morning, noon, and night? or what interest can a heart-hardened married man take in poor Mr Leech's models?

Still, the day was young; it was a long time to lunch, and the promenade was the only dissipation left me, so I turned wearily towards it, and met presently with a sailor. That was nothing wonderful, seeing that sailors abounded; but this one looked so particularly salt, that he attracted my attention; he had on a sou'-wester cap, and a boating-jacket, and a pair of waterproof overalls; while most of the boatmen endeavoured to advertise the sea as always calm and pleasant, by adopting the airiest, most hornpipy attire.

My surprise was great when the nautical individual stopped, held out his hand, and addressed me by name.

'Why,' I cried, 'it is not Trevor!'

'Is it not?' replied my friend, who carries philosophical speculation to great lengths. 'Perhaps you are right, for who knows whether he actually exists? However, it is better, for practical purposes, to assume that the abstraction or idea which is called Trevor really stands before you. I (if you

will waive this question of my existence) am going out fishing; will you come?"

"My dear fellow," I replied, "I am willing to accept you as a great and pleasing fact; but when you come to the existence of fishes, I plead guilty to scepticism. I have been out fishing, and never yet caught anything but pout the size of my middle finger—a dreary pastime!"

"Ah," said Trevor, "you have only tried line-fishing on the rocks close to the shore. Come out in my yawl, and I will promise you better sport than that, at all events."

"What! have you got a yawl? By the by, what is a yawl?"

"Do you not know? Why, a dandy-rigged cutter, to be sure."

"Ah," said I, "I see; but what is the crew?"

"One man."

"Has she got a deck and cabin?"

"Well, she is half-decked. There is a cuddy forward, where you can be very comfortable."

I stopped my questions, for there seemed to be no end to the enigmas which fell from my friend's lips: a forward lassie I had heard of, but a forward cuddy—I followed in silence to the beach, where Trevor caught hold of the rowlocks of a little boat about a yard long and half a yard across, and invited me to help him to drag it down to the sea.

"What!" cried I, startled out of my resolution to ask no further questions. "Is this your yawl?"

"Not exactly," he replied laughing; and pointing to a pretty, ladylike-looking vessel bobbing about at anchor some quarter of a mile off. "That is the *Ethel*; this is only the dingy."

When we had got this to the water's edge, a hamper of provisions was brought forward by a man who let out boats and bathing-machines, and placed in it, after which Trevor and I followed; I sitting at one end, he at the other, with a pair of miniature sculls in his hands; and when we were thus arranged, the same man pushed us out into the sea. The waves were not very big, but the boat was very small, which came to the same thing practically, for we tossed and reared and plunged in a fearful way.

Our progress was not rapid, for Trevor could only take little paddling strokes, any attempt at increased exertion resulting merely in two violent blows inflicted simultaneously on my knee-caps, followed, not by an apology, but a rude remark upon the length of my legs. Still we did eventually reach the *Ethel* in safety, and gladly did I grasp its bulwarks. Trevor followed; the dingy was attached by a long rope to the stern of the vessel, and the crew went forward and began hauling up the anchor, Trevor and I coiling away the dripping rope as it was pulled in; before this operation was over, I found out why my friend wore oilskins.

At last the anchor was got on board and lashed down, and the crew began hoisting a sail.

After a great deal of what seemed to me like fidgeting, everything seemed to be settled comfortably. Trevor steered; I sat near him on the windward side; the crew placed himself a little more forward, so that he could see clearly ahead. The *Ethel* tore merrily through the sparkling, hissing water, and the motion, which was slight, had an exhilarating instead of a depressing effect upon me. "I am a good sailor," thought I, "and I will even venture on a pipe."

After filling my meerschaum, I handed my pouch

to the crew, who thanked me kindly, took a handful of shag, and crammed it into his mouth, champing away as if it were an ortolan he had got there. I had often heard and read of this practice being common amongst sailors and Americans, but as a personal experience it was new to me, and not pleasing. Trevor now informed me that we were bound to the trawling-grounds, some ten miles off, and suggested that I should try for a mackerel as we ran along. I acceded; and by his directions, got out of the cuddy (which proved to be a little cabin) a piece of bright brass, with hooks and swivels attached to it, so arranged as to cause it to spin rapidly when drawn through the water. This thing I attached to a cord, and then dropping it over the side, allowed it to tow a long way in our wake. Presently, there was a tug, tug at the line which I held between my fingers, and hauling it up quickly, I soon had my first sight of a live mackerel. And a beautiful fish it is: you can form no more idea of its tints from its appearance when lying on the fishmonger's slab, than you can of a blooming rosebud by the inspection of the same flower when withered. The mackerel, however, were not very plentiful, and by the time I had taken half-a-dozen, we were on the spot where serious operations were to commence.

I have not yet alluded to the trawling apparatus, though, indeed, it was the most prominent thing in the vessel, and the one which most excited my wonderment. It consisted of a vast beam, longer than the yawl itself, with a heavy iron hoop at each end, and a net attached to it. This machine we three, with some labour, got outside the shrouds and ropes; and then the crew made fast the rope belonging to the anchor to one which connected the two ends of the pole, which was lowered carefully, and allowed to swing slowly aft, care being taken that the net was clear. Then the rope was slackened, and the trawl allowed to sink to the bottom of the sea, along which it was our mission to drag it; the tiller was withdrawn, for it is not possible to steer while the trawl is down; and we had nothing to do but to sit still, and hope that the fish were getting into the net, progressing but very slowly, and with an uneasy, jerky motion, very different from the free bounding of five minutes before.

I found on inquiry that they generally kept the trawl down three hours, which was very trying to my patience, who longed, at the end of a third of that time, to pull it up, and have a peep to see what we had caught; this, however, would have been to act like a child, who grubs up a seed he has sown every now and then, to see how it is getting on; and I was overruled. Soon, too, a fresh anxiety came over me; I began to fear that I was not so good a sailor as I at first hoped; and when Trevor proposed that we should make a night of it, I replied, that much as I longed to spend the hours of darkness in bumping over the sea in a semi-open boat, I could not put my wife to the mental agony of fancying that I was drowned, and then finding that her fears were unfounded—a consideration which I own to have been an after-thought. I had to confess my qualms shortly afterwards, when Trevor proposed lunch; and it by no means dissipated them to watch him and crew making a hearty meal to my poor accompaniment of nibbling a sea-biscuit.

The crew was my guardian angel, for he grew talkative when he had had a pannikin of sherry.

and diverted my attention by a yarn, which I will give you presently. He was a good-looking, wiry little man with bronzed features, and earrings in his ears; a professional fisherman, whom Trevor, dismissing the pleasure-boatman he found in charge of the yawl, had engaged for the season.

"What happens," I asked, on finding him inclined for conversation, "if one goes over a rock?"

"Why, it tears a hole in the net, and lets all the fish out. But we try to avoid ground where there's rocks. Sometimes a porpoise, or some big chap like that, will get into the net and smash it; sometimes a ship, sailing past to windward, will take the wind out of your sails—the boat stops sudden, and that upsets the trawl, and turns all the fish out. Sometimes it comes on to blow hard, and then we tie the rope to a buoy, and let go, picking it up again when the storm has blown itself out."

"You get caught by heavy gales sometimes, I suppose."

"Heavy gales! I believe yer. It blow up this channel sometimes as you wouldn't believe it; but the hardest I ever knowed it blow was the night the *Crystal Palace* were lost. You have heard of her?"

"O yes. Were you out that night?"

"I wor, and I shall never forget it; and yet, somehow, I never felt like drowning; no, not when all the others thought it was dicky. Even in spite of the skipper's warning, I believed we should live it out."

"The skipper's warning! What was that?"

"Ah, that wor a queer thing, that wor. You see we wor in Ramsgate Harbour; there were five of us, all Ramsgate men but me; so I slept on board, and the others passed the night ashore. Well, abo't four o'clock in the morning, or may be five, I was roused up by some one clambering into the lugger. "Who is that?" I sings out. "It's me," says the skipper; and he seemed all of a sweat like. "Why, you are early," says I; "we shan't get the tide for three hours yet." "Bill," says he, "I can't sleep, and it's of no use trying." "Why, what's the matter?" says I. "Why," says he, "don't you say anything about it, because some folks would laugh; but all through the night, as sure as ever I was dropping off to sleep, I was woken up by some one walking across the room in boots filled with water: I heard them go squash, squash, squash at every step—heavy steps they wor too, just as a man would take in fisherman's boots. I called out: 'Who's there?' and then the steps stopped, and I heard no more till I was just dropping off again, and then it came once more, squash, squash, squash. I jumped out of bed, and searched the room, ay, a dozen times, but there wor nothing; and at last I could bear it no longer, so I up and dressed, and came off here. Bill, I don't like it, and I have half a mind not to start this tide."

"Well, I had been always brought up religious, so I did not make light of it, but I says: "If it's a warning, it's a warning; and if it isn't, it isn't; and the wind's a-moderating, and it don't look nigh so dirty as it did."

"Well, he seemed struck by my observation, and said no more about it; and the rest come aboard, and we started. When we had been out about a couple of hours, it came on to blow—my eye, it did blow; I never saw anything at all like it; and it grew worse and worse every hour, till you would not have thought any-

thing *could* live. We saw a lugger go down not half a mile from us just about sunset, and that wasn't a pleasant sight with the night before us. And yet, somehow, I did not lose heart; I suppose I knowed my time had not come. It certainly did make me feel queer to see Jack Conger blubber, for I thought Jack worn't afeared of anything in this world, or the other. "Why, Jack," says I, "it's only drowning." "It isn't that," says he; "but the old woman thinks there's five pounds in the savings-bank, and I had to draw out a couple unbeknown to her, so she will only find three." "Never mind, mate," says I; "there will be no funeral expenses." "Well, that's a comfort," says he. But it gave me a turn to hear him blubber. "Skipper," says I, when it was blowing the hardest, "just put your hand in my pocket, and get me out a bit of bacca," for you see I was at the tiller, and both hands busy, and he stood nigh me. "Here, take mine," says he; "it does not matter who has bacca to-night, and who has none;" and he gave me his box. "Come, skipper," says I, "don't you give in." "I am a doomed man," says he, shaking his head. Well, the words were hardly out of his mouth, before the biggest wave I ever saw came clean over us, and we were as near gone as we could be. I did think it was all up then, but the boat righted again somehow, and every one looked at his mates to see whether they were all there. *The skipper was gone!* and almost directly afterwards, the gale began to slacken."

"And was the skipper the only one lost?"

"The only one. It is a queer story; and as some don't believe in warnings, I should not like to tell it, only I have the proof in my pocket. Here is his very bacca-box, poor fellow."

"A singular coincidence," observed Trevor, who is somewhat impatient of the supernatural. "No doubt the despondency caused by his nightmare deprived him of the energy to hold on. But it is time to take up the trawl."

This important operation was accordingly commenced. The sail was lowered, and Trevor and crew hauled upon the rope until the great beam with its iron hoops was alongside, and then they called upon me to help to get it on board.

"Wait a moment," said I, "until—I have been very unwell."

So they held on for a bit; and then the paroxysm being over, I felt sufficiently recovered to take part in the proceedings, and share the excitement. The beam was hauled up out of the sea, and made fast, and then we proceeded to gather in the net. The first fish we came to was a skate, with his head twisted in the meshes, then a sole in a like predicament, then a plaice, a brill, a john-dory, a gurnet. As we hauled, the captives became thicker and thicker, until at last the end of the net was dragged in, a lively flabby mass.

"Shall we spank away straight home, or trawl over the ground again going back?" Trevor asked me; and with Spartan fortitude, I accepted the latter course; but, to my intense relief, crew shook his head, and said that there was a stiffish breeze coming on, and we had better run in.

So the sails were hoisted, Trevor again took the tiller, and the *Ethel* once more sprang free and unfettered over the waves.

When he had done a great deal of mopping and tidying, crew untied the purse of the net, and we counted our spoils. Fifteen pair of soles, two john-dories, four gurnet, twenty plaice, eighteen

brill, forty skate, and three nondescripts of the dog-fish tribe, constituted our bag; which was, it seemed, a more than average haul. It certainly was the best day's fishing I had ever had, and I have had some experience both in salt-water and fresh. Sea-sickness is the only drawback, but most people can get over that, after a short probation; and after all, it is not so great a discomfort—when you are used to it.

ARCHITECTURE OF BIRDS.

If we desire to look upon something which the first inhabitants of our planet saw exactly as it is to-day, we have only to stand before a bird's nest. Your bird is no innovator: he laid down the plan of his dwelling at the creation of the world, and, while everything around him has been changing, assuming new forms, yielding to the influence of fashion, has remained content with his primitive architecture ever since. He calculates the number, and considers the necessities of his family, and with unerring sagacity provides for them all. He imitates none of his neighbours, and his neighbours, in their turn, display no inclination to imitate him. There is in our rural districts a tradition of a farmer's daughter, who, having observed her mother winnow at a certain barn-door, stuck to the same locality through life, without the slightest reference to the quarter from whence the wind blew. So exactly is it with the bird. He cares for nothing but his own ideas of comfort, convenience, suitability—whether the original type of his mansion necessitated its being built on the summit of a rock or a tree, under the eaves of a house, or in the thick foliage of a bush, in the crevice of a cliff, or amid the rustling grass of a meadow.

To study the habits of birds, is to traverse the whole extent of man's universal habitation, through every zone from the equator to the polar circle; from the tops of the highest ranges, amid unscalable crags and snows, to the sedgy margin of the sea, and the mossy banks of streams. Wherever the air is fanned by a wing—wherever eggs are deposited—wherever little bills are opened almost hourly for food—wherever the hen sits, and the male bird roves and toils to support her—wherever, from bough or twig, he pours music into the woods, to cheer his helpmate during her labour of love, there is poetry; whether, as on the lofty surface of Danger Island, or amid the flowery bogs of the Orinoco, the airy artisan works in solitude, or on village roof and church spire, clings to the vicinity of man. Naturalists gravely inform us that birds are bipeds like ourselves, which in some casts may be thought to account for their fondness for our society, as with the sparrow, the swallow, the red-breast, and the martin; but, on the other hand, several members of this numerous family, though they boast of no more legs than we, make careful use of those they have to keep out of our way. Even among the swallow tribe, there is one remarkable branch which abjures the man-loving qualities of his congeners—we mean the sea-swallow of the Twelve Thousand Islands, which in breeding-time mounts high into the air, takes a scrutinising survey of the earth beneath, and selecting for his quarters the least-frequented, descends, skims into some lofty cave, and there builds his procreant cradle. In this way he hopes to elude observation. Flattering himself that his whereabouts will remain undiscovered, he darts away with his wife to their

favourite element the ocean, where it breaks upon solitary shores, and flying along its crested surges, gathers from amid the foam and spray the materials of its dwelling, the nature of which still remains unknown. Whatever it may be, it forms a delicate bassinet in which to deposit its eggs and rear its young. Less white than alabaster, the nest of the sea-swallow is of a light colour, and semi-transparent, odoriferous in smell, glutinous, and rather sweet to the taste. Rows of these little bowls, which look like so many vessels of porcelain, run along the rocky walls of caverns, and are filled with eggs thickly bedropped with spots of celestial blue. To the people of the Flowery Land, these nests are a delicacy, which, when of the best quality, are weighed in the market against gold. What, however, renders some nests better than others is uncertain; it may be that in parts of the ocean the ingredient which imparts the most delicate flavour to the substance is not to be found; or else, on shore, the flowers that supply the perfume are too few, so that the swallow is compelled to have recourse to blossoms of inferior sweetness.

From the mouth of the swallow's cave, you may sometimes, from a long distance, discern another and very different specimen of ornithological building. This is a mound, sometimes sixty or seventy feet in length, almost as much in diameter, and about six feet high. This also is a nest, or rather a city of nests, for it is constructed so as to receive a whole republic of birds, who, as in a well-ordered state, have all their separate dwellings, with streets, highways, common chambers, breeding apartments, and so on. In some, therefore, you find callow citizens, or fledglings, or eggs, or the grave parents of the state, discussing or meditating upon its common interests. Nothing can be more curious than a section of such a bird-mound, with its various cells and compartments laid open to the view.

From this cyclopean style of architecture, the distance is prodigious to the house of the tailor-bird, which selects for its habitation the inside of a leaf, and with its bill and claws, sews its house to it. It takes a filament of fine grass, and steadying the leaf with one of its feet, uses its bill for a needle, or rather for a borer; then having made a little hole, it introduces the grassy filament into the edge of the leaf, and afterwards doing as much for the other edge, weaves between both a sort of herring-bone netting, strong enough to support its nest. Within this net it immediately begins building until it has wrought a small soft purse, sufficiently capacious to contain the female and her eggs. The habitation being completed, she enters tail foremost, leaving her little head and bill visible at the top of the purse, situated directly under the leaf's stem, and forthwith commences her maternal duties. Now begins the business of the male, which flies backwards and forwards in search of such delicacies as his lady loves; and having been successful, approaches the leaf, and with true marital tenderness, puts them gently into the female's mouth. He then seats himself upon a branch overhead, and watching his helpmate as she swings to and fro in her airy couch, twitters or sings incessantly to keep up her spirits.

Among us, the most accomplished bird-architect is the wren, which, in compliment to his building powers, is by our neighbours called the *roitelet*, or little king; and certainly no king has a more comfortable dwelling. The most flexible grass

roots, the finest grass, the softest moss, the most delicate down from its own breast, constitute the materials of this beautiful structure, which forms a perfect sphere of dark emerald green. This edifice has two doors, one at which the little king or queen enters, the other through which it emerges when it desires to stretch its wings or plume its feathers. When at home, the point of the bill and the tip of the tail are visible at the opposite entrances, while the vaulted roof protects it from raindrops, and assists in concentrating the heat by which the regal fledglings are hatched. The builder of St Paul's, when projecting his magnificent dome, may have taken a hint from his ancestors the wrens. But unwilling to accumulate all her gifts on one of her children, nature has left the *roitelet* quite without the power of charming Madame Wren by his voice, a fact to which Shakspeare alludes where he says:

The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.

But this unmusical character does not belong to all the varieties of the wren, since there is one kind which may be regarded as a songster. With respect to external appearance, there are few northern birds more favoured than the golden-crested wren, the feathers of whose crest, as they glance and quiver, look like sprays of burnished gold in the sunbeams. The war recently declared against these little people is as absurd as it is cruel. Supposed to be the gardeners' enemies, they have been hunted down without pity or remorse; whereas, instead of destroying the fruit, they only eat the insects which do really destroy it, and should therefore be esteemed as little winged scavengers, who clear away from gardens very much that is pernicious. If we understood our own interest, we should look upon our diminutive ally, not exceeding two drachms in weight, much as the Turks do upon the stork, which they reverence for its filial piety. If contempt can dwell within breasts so small, the wren must surely feel it for the stone curlew, which, too ignorant or too lazy to build a nest at all, lays its eggs on the bare ground, where they are crushed by Hodge's foot, or by the plough.

The country people in France love the song of the wren, which is most agreeable in the month of May, that being the breeding-season. In many French provinces, the rustics entertain so great a respect for the *roitelet*, that they not only abstain from injuring it, but will not so much as touch its nest, built sometimes against the sides of their houses or stables, though generally a thick bush or full-foliaged tree is preferred. Like nearly all other birds, the wren takes a fancy to some particular locality, where it will construct its habitation, in spite of dangers and difficulties. Its eggs, from ten to twelve in number, are about the size of pease, and when they are hatched, it becomes so fierce and pugnacious, that it will attack large birds, and put them to flight by the punctures of its sharp bill. It is the smallest of European birds, and holds, therefore, with us the place which the humming-bird occupies in Asia and America. This diminutive creature, which is as ingenious as it is affectionate, forms its tiny nest with cotton or fine silky filaments, which it twines and arranges so as to afford the softest conceivable couch for its eggs, which never exceed two in number,

and resemble small white beads, dotted with bright yellow. The young, when they first emerge from the shell, are little larger than flies, and perfectly naked, though a fine down soon appears upon the skin, which gradually ripens into feathers so brilliant and dazzling in colour as not to be exceeded by the rarest gems, or even by the tints of the rainbow. So great, in fact, is the beauty of these birds, that the ladies of the countries in which they abound suspend them instead of diamonds as drops to their earrings.

Tiny as the humming-bird is, neither the eagle nor the condor exceeds it in love for its young. A French missionary, during his residence in Surinam, took a humming-bird's nest in which the young were just hatched, and placed it on the sill of an open window in a cage. The parents, as he conjectured, followed their young, and brought them food, the male and female by turns, which they introduced between the bars of the cage. At length, finding that no attempt was made to harm them, they grew fond of the place, and perching upon the top of the cage, or flying about the room, rewarded the worthy priest by their music for the delicate fare he soon learned to provide for them. This was a sort of soft paste made of biscuit, Spanish wine, and sugar, and nearly transparent. Over this they passed their long tongues, and when they had satisfied their hunger, either fell asleep or burst forth into song. Familiarity, if it did not in their case breed contempt, at least banished all apprehension, for they alighted on the priest's head, or perched on his finger, where their long rainbow-like tails floated like little ribbons in the air. But all earthly pleasures have an end; a rat ate up the humming-birds, nest and all, and left the poor missionary to seek for new companions.

Down among the coral-reefs in the Southern Pacific you meet with other bird-structures, which in their way deserve equal attention. Here the sea-eagles build their nests, always, if possible, in the same islet, and, if there be such a convenience, on the same tree. On a small wild flat in the ocean, too confined to allure inhabitants, and apparently too arid for vegetation, there grew nevertheless one tree, on which a pair of fishing-eagles erected their dwelling. There these lords of the waves, contemplating their vast empire, sat aloft in their eyrie, male and female, looking at their eggs, and dreaming of the future. Our readers will remember the Raven's Oak, which the woodman, whose brow like a pent-house hung over his eyes, felled and floated down the course of the river. So it was with the tree of the fishing-eagles; some savage applied his axe to the stem, and down it came, though, it is to be presumed, not while the young eagles were in the nest, for the mother did not break her heart, neither did the father follow the timber with vindictive pertinacity. On the contrary, having consulted his helpmate, he took up his lodgings in a bush, and there provided as well as he could for the support and comfort of his heirs and successors. There might be tall trees at no great distance, there might also be islands larger and prettier; but he was born on this sandy flat; he therefore loved it, and stuck to it, and had it not provided him with a bush, he would have built his nest on the sand. Such, over some creatures, is the power of locality. The higher the nature, the more extensive become the sympathies, so that to some it is enough if they can rest anywhere on this globe. They love

the planet in general, but would like, if they could, to make a country excursion from it to Jupiter, Sirius, or Canopus, just by way of exercising their wings.

We have seen the humming-bird building in a little garden shrub, the tailor-bird in the folds of a leaf; but there is one of their family which selects a far more extraordinary situation, in order to place its young beyond the reach of vermin. Selecting the tallest tree within the range of its experience, it weaves for itself a sort of long pouch with a narrow neck, and suspends it to the point of a bare twig some sixty or seventy feet from the ground. There, in its pensile habitation, it lays its eggs, warms them into life, and when the callow brood begin to open their bills, feeds them fifty or sixty times in the day with such dainties as their constitutions require. This bird is the *Aplonis metallica*, about the size of a starling, with plumage of a dark glossy green, interfused with purple, which gives forth as it flies bright metallic reflections. The *aplonis* is gregarious, like man, since it loves to build its nest in the close neighbourhood of other creatures of its own species, so that you may often behold fifty nests on the same tree, waving and balancing in the air. On the plain beneath, the *aplonis* sees from its nest the long-necked emu flying like the wind before the hunter, immense flights of white pigeons, or the shy and active bower-bird constructing its palace, four feet long by almost two feet in height, where it eats berries with its harem, brings up its offspring, and darting hither and thither before the savage, seeks to allure him away from its home. All the shrubs, and vines, and low thickets in the vicinity are haunted by perquoets no larger than sparrows, whose plumage, gorgeous as the brightest flowers, may be said to light up the woods.

The only European bird that builds a pensile nest is one of the family that we familiarly denominate tom-tits. This lilliputian architect is as choice in his materials as he is skilful in the arrangement of them—his bases, his arches, his metopes, and architraves consist of cobwebs, the finest mosses, the most silky grasses, which are woven, and twisted, and matted together, so as to defy the drenching of the most pitiless storms, while within, his wife and little ones recline on beds of down as soft as the breast of a swan. Scarcely less genius is displayed by the magpie, which, having constructed its dwelling with extraordinary care, covers it with a sheath of thorns, which, bristling all round like quills upon the fretful porcupine, effectually defend it from the approach of insidious enemies. The portal to this airy palace is at a little distance scarcely visible; but if you diligently observe, you will perceive the magpie dart swiftly between the thorns, and disappear beneath his formidable *chevaux de frise*. To this stronghold he sometimes carries his strange thefts—his gold and silver coins, his spoons, his sugar-tongs, and any other bright article that strikes his fancy. Birds of the dove kind are proverbial for the slovenly style in which they provide for their families. Putting together a few sticks, which form a sort of rack to support their eggs, they think they have done enough for posterity, and forthwith lay without scruple upon this frail cradle. It may be fairly conjectured that they say to themselves: 'If man will eat my eggs, my young ones, and me, upon him be the charge of seeing that I have decent accommodation.' In the same

spirit act all the barn-door fowls, hardly taking the trouble to find a soft place for their eggs, but laying anywhere, like the stone curlew. This reckless depravity of the maternal instinct has generally been attributed to the ostrich as well as to the domestic hen—but unjustly. She lays, it is true, her eggs in the sand, but not without knowing where she puts them, and not without visiting the same spot daily to lay a new egg, till, as the French say, she has finished her *ponte*. If the case were otherwise, how could we account for finding all her eggs together? Nature has informed her, that in those warm latitudes in which she shakes her feathers, it is quite unnecessary for her to squat upon her eggs, which the solar heat amply suffices to hatch; indeed, so scorching is the sand of the desert, that if she did not lay her family hopes tolerably deep, her eggs would be roasted instead of hatched. To the superficial observation of man, the surface of the desert looks all alike—smooth, undulating, or blown up into hillocks; but the ostrich's practised eye is able to detect the minutest elevations in the arenaceous plain, so that she can go straight to the spot where her first egg has been left, to deposit a second and a third close to it. Indeed, the Arabs, who habitually traverse the waste, sometimes rival her in keenness of perception, and take forth her treasures, while in maternal confidence she is scouring hither and thither in search of food.

To many others among the inferior animals, man deals forth his unthinking reproaches. To the cuckoo, for example, he objects to her habit of obtruding her egg or eggs into other people's premises, and leaving them there to be hatched by sparrow, wry-neck, or starling, as the case may be. But while bearing thus hard upon the cuckoo, he forgets the terrible curse, under which, like another Cain, she walks about the earth, urged forwards by some resistless impulse, and condemned to the eternal repetition of two analogous notes—cuckoo, cuckoo. What do those syllables mean? The Abbé de Nemours, who devoted twenty years to the language of birds, or one of the original doctors of the Hellenic mythology, might perhaps have explained, but has not; so we must be content to regard as a mystery the secret of the cuckoo, which in some respects resembles those *ames damnées* which fly for ever over the Black Sea, according to inconsiderate tradition, for if they never paused to build nests or lay eggs, it must have been all over with them long before this time. The cuckoo has some odd tricks which have seldom been noted—for instance, she seems to find out some small bird's nest, say, in a hole in the wall, too small by far for her to enter. In this case, she squats upon the ground, lays her egg, and then, with bill or claws, takes it up, and pokes it into the hole, after which she flies away, shrieking her awfully-monotonous song. In a forest in France, we used day after day to watch this smoky blue traveller, as, in the dawn of a summer's morning, she flew across the leafy glades, or down the glens, resting her weary feet for a moment on some giant bough, and then shooting away through the soft green light, repeating her strange and ominous cry. What is the original country of the cuckoo? Has she any original country? Or is she not one of those wretched cosmopolites who know no attachment to any hallowed spot, no love or knowledge of parents, having been brought up by strangers, who regarded her from her birth as an ugly changeling,

thrust by some evil spirit into their nest? Surely the cuckoo is to be pitied, since she knows no home, has never seen a hearth, or experienced the soft care of fabricating a nest or hatching an egg.

THE CLYFFARDS OF CLYFFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LOST SIR MASSINGERBARD,' &c.

CHAPTER VII.—HUSBAND AND WIFE.

'HAS Cyril's death made you so very sad, Ralph, that not even I can comfort you?' asked Mrs Clyffard of her husband, as he sat in a small chamber communicating with his dressing-room, and in which he was accustomed to transact his business affairs. He smiled, not sadly, but gratefully, lovingly in her false face, yet gravely shook his head.

'You always comfort me, dear one. If I were dejected on my own account only, you would soon cheer me. But it is not so, Grace, although many would be sad who knew their doom had been spoken, who felt as I feel'—he laid his hand upon his heart—'that I have had my warning, and must soon go; yet I do not repine for that matter.'

'I will not combat your opinion, love,' answered she, 'fallacious and ill-grounded though I believe it to be: with me, whatever you think is sacred.'

'Sweet Grace, how I love you!' returned the old man. 'It is only for your sake that I regret to go. I have reigned here my allotted time; how gladly would I leave all to my successor, Heaven knows, if I might only think he would hold it. Poor Rue, poor Rue!'

Ralph Clyffard bent his head, and hid his face. His wife's arm still encircled his neck; her voice was low and soft, and seemed to tremble with love and pity; but her eyes looked down upon him with contemptuous scorn.

'And what is to prevent Rupert from holding his own, husband? Nothing, save a dark legend of your house—a morbid fantasy of your own—a'

'Did you never read my uncle Roderick's will, Grace?' interrupted Ralph.

'His will?' cried Mrs Clyffard, involuntarily withdrawing her caressing hand. 'I never even heard that he had made a will. I did not know that he *could* have made a will. Is not the land entailed? Father to son, uncle to nephew; has it not ever been so with your ancient race?'

'It has ever been so,' returned her husband gloomily. 'Father to son, but never to son's son, since Guy's time.'

'Ay, ay,' exclaimed Mrs Clyffard impatiently; but masking her apprehensions with great effort, she added, in a soothing tone: 'Let us not talk of that, Ralph; let us not think of it, if possible.' Then, with affected carelessness, she added: 'Is yonder dusty parchment at your elbow this said will?'

She reached her hand towards it, but he was beforehand with her, and gently, but firmly, he retained his hold upon it. 'Nay, do not open it, Grace, for mere curiosity's sake.'

If he could but have seen her face in its rapacious earnestness—the intense longing of her greedy eyes; if he could but have known what it cost her to restrain the nervous twitching of those taper fingers, he could scarcely have talked of Curiosity—it was Cupidity aghast with Fear.

'I will tell you all that Roderick would have me

tell, wife, if he were alive. I hide nothing from you—nothing.'

'Nothing, Ralph,' returned she tenderly, her mind straining after the precious parchment like a greyhound in the leash. 'If I thought you kept a secret from me, it would kill me.'

'Would it so, dear one? Then, since I would have you live, you shall hear my uncle Roderick's will. He herein leaves Clyffe to Arthur his son, and to Cyril after him, for thirty years, and then'—

'But he *could* not leave it, Ralph. How mean you, then, he left it?'

'He thought he could. He was mad—the second son, and yet mad; think of that, Grace! No lawyer has ever seen this writing; it would count as nothing in his eyes; he would smile at the dead Clyffard's ravings, and I do not choose that any man should do that. For thirty years willed he Clyffe to my father and my brother, after which he shall return—so it runs—and resume his own again. I have seen his coffin in the chapel vault closed with a mighty lock like yonder chest, and the key is buried with him, that he may arise, and let himself out when the time comes. The thirty years will very soon be ended.'

'I trust, Ralph, that you do not believe'—

'Fear not, Grace,' interrupted her husband quietly; 'I keep my own wits still, although they are sorely tried. I almost wish it was not so, and that I could deem dead Roderick might come to life again. It is worse to think that he was mad, having no right to be so; and rather than men should know of this said will, I would lose many a fair acre of those which it so strangely devises. It was the mere reading of it which set me sorrowing. How goes it with Rupert, think you, Grace?'

'He looks bravely, husband. He will fitly wear your honours after you, though not, I trust, for long, long years to come.'

'He has heard the news, I suppose?'

'I told him myself, Ralph, lest some vulgar tongue should wound him with the rough delivery of it; and I charged the household not to speak of it within his hearing.'

'You should have charged them not to speak of it at all,' returned her husband sternly. 'Great Heaven, are the misfortunes of our house to be the talk of grooms!'

'We cannot chain the tongue, Ralph; and since the law forbids to cut it out, as your high-handed race were wont to do when a menial's speech displeased them, the most we can do is to direct its course.'

'As wise as fair!' repeated Ralph in a low tone.

'You have done right, Grace, as you always do.'

'Nay, husband, I have only done my best. Little, indeed, is the best I can do, in return for what I have received at your hands. I was low, and you lifted me up; I was base, and you set me in honour.' A shadow flitted over her husband's brow. 'Not,' she continued, 'that I ever think of these things now, save when I am alone with you, as now. I have left the Past behind me altogether. Connected with your race, although by marriage only, I feel myself well-born.'

'That is rightly said, Grace. The Clyffards, like the king, confer nobility itself. Never speak, then, of what was once your lowly lot, even to me. You are mistress of Clyffe; you will be so after I am gone—that is, until'—Ralph Clyffard paused

and sighed, the wave of thought overtaken by another ere it could break in speech. 'And what did Rupert say when you told him of poor Cyril?'

'He said he was grieved to hear it, but scarcely surprised. He hoped Uncle Cyril would be buried at the Hall, and not at the Dene.' Ralph shuddered. 'Then he seemed lost in thought, and answered me at random; but presently, upon some trifling interruption—it was the organ in the gallery, played by Mildred Leigh, I think—he brightened up at once. Music is good for him, and the companionship of the young. It is but a dull life he leads here, and fit to make a young man sad.'

'Raymond is not sad,' returned her husband, like one who, to gain time, urges something which he knows has but little force.

'That is true,' answered Mrs Clyffard coldly. 'To chase the stag, the fox, the otter, is happiness enough for Raymond. He might have been a huntsman born, for any instinct of gentle birth that he possesses. Nay, even a huntsman would have some reverence for the race which he served, whereas Raymond'—

'Well, wife, what of Raymond?'

'Nothing, Ralph—nothing. You are grave enough already, without my saddening you further. And, after all, perhaps he only does it to vex me. He does not love his stepmother: that is only natural. A man's sons, unless they are dutiful, like Rupert, too often resent their father's second marriage.'

'Resent it!' cried Ralph Clyffard, starting up and smiting the table with his fist—'resent it! What! is he his father's tutor? Am I to be told my duty by this rude boy? Have I robbed him of gold or lands, that he should be envious of me? Does he grudge an old man that which renders the last few years of his life less lonely, less drear? Even had we children, he would have his mother's portion; they would not rob him of a silver-piece. Nay, I have left him thrice as much besides. Unnatural, undutiful, base!'

'Hush, Ralph—hush. Be calm. Do nothing in anger. Let poor me, at least, be not the means of sowing dissension between father and son; for he is your son, you know, after all. What I was about to say was only this, that knowing how dear to me is the honour of your house, and with what worship I look upon the Clyffards, alien though I be, he scoffs and sneers at what should be held most reverend, at least, by one of their own blood; nay, he says "blood" is nothing. Why not Bone—a gentleman of Bone? If old Blood is so precious, why, then, are old Bones so cheap?—But I fear I vex you, husband.'

Ralph Clyffard's eyes were flashing fire. One hand clung to the table, grasping it like a vice; the other pressed against his heart. His white lips moved as with a spasm twice and thrice before they could shape 'Go on.'

'There is little more to say, Ralph; I have said already more than I intended. You must please hold this a secret; you must understand it is to me alone he thus speaks out. He flings his gibes about to all, 'tis true, making a mock of ancestry; but he keeps his worst for me, because, as I have said, he knows the barb goes home. His aim at me is surest when he strikes through you and yours. For instance'—

'Ay, for instance,' gasped Ralph Clyffard; 'give me that.'

'He says "the fair woman," for whose sake

Bertram killed his brother, and whom you yourself'—

Ralph uttered a cry of horror. 'I see her now!' cried he. 'Some death is coming, or the Curse is falling! Look—look; there—there!'

'Dear husband, you are pointing to the mirror; you behold only the reflection of myself.' She spoke as lightly as she could, but her voice trembled with genuine terror. 'Dear Ralph, 'tis I. Do you not know your Grace?'

He shrank from her caress with almost loathing. 'Touch me not!' cried he, repelling her with one hand, while he shaded his eyes with the other. 'I cannot bear it; so like—so like! Was it indeed the mirror?'

'Look for yourself,' said she, 'and at the original.' She smiled her sunniest smile, and, with her head aslant, shook her fair locks about her in a shower of gold. As different looked she from that rigid form which, with menacing finger, had just glared itself before Ralph Clyffard's gaze, as Hebe from Atropos.

'Fair Grace!' cried he enraptured, 'how beautiful you are; it makes me young to look at you! How could I ever mistake you for another, far less for that dread spectre—harbinger of ill! Thrice have I seen it. Was it not thrice, Grace? I can think now of nothing but of thee.'

'You told me thrice, Ralph, and that it boded Death, or worse; and on the fifth day these messengers arrive telling of Cyril's end. This must be more than chance.'

'Ay, more than chance indeed.'

'Yet Raymond says there is no "fair woman" at Clyffe save me—a cruel saying, when we think of what she was.'

'Does he dare to say that much?' exclaimed Ralph hoarsely. 'Does he think I am befooled, then?'

'Nay, he knows nothing of what you have seen. How should he, husband, save through me alone?'

'True—true; but he makes light of the legends of our house.'

'Makes more than light, sir; makes merry with them, as with a churchyard tale told by a sexton to keep boys from leap-frog on the tombs; has no more reverent word for any of them than Hobgoblin, Bogle; and no more courteous term than Dupe and Fool for those who have cause to know better.' She waited, looking for a storm of wrath, but this time it did not come. Ralph's mind had been working in a direction which, with all her skill, she could not follow. Like some out-maneuvred general, who suddenly finds his beleaguered foe at large, having emerged behind him underground by sap, so she stared, foiled, in her husband's quiet face, and listened to his measured tones.

'This may be, as you say, Grace; nay, if you say so, it is—and yet I must not be hasty. He was my late wife's favourite son.'

'Parents should have no favourites, Ralph. If she spoiled him, that is no reason why you should complete his ruin.'

'You say well, Grace; parents should have no favourites: there is no selfishness which works such ill as undue partiality in father or mother towards any of their offspring.'

'Where it is undue,' slid in the woman.

'And if, in spite of duty, such a feeling creeps into a father's heart, not only should he not exhibit it, but should strive by all means to make up to

the less beloved child for the injury he has involuntarily done him. At times, I fear, upon the contrary, I have been harsh to Raymond, vexed with him, because I am vexed with my own heart on his account. His nature is so different from mine—from that of all our race.'

'Ay, it is indeed.'

'And yet, if he is rough in manner, he has a feeling heart.'

'He went a-fishing this morning, though his uncle Cyril died but two days back,' remarked Mrs Clyffard. 'I saw him by the beck's side myself. A feeling heart, forsooth! Nay, even if he has, what matter? Why should that poor excuse be taken for grave derelict of duty, for vice, for disrespect?'

'What would you have me do with Raymond, Grace?' asked her husband thoughtfully.

'I, Ralph? Nay, it is no concern of mine. If it is your good pleasure to pass over faults that are patent to the world, by all means do so; but seeing your solicitude upon poor Rupert's account, I—'

'Well, Grace?'

'I wonder at your blindness—that is all. Setting aside the ill effect that Raymond's example might have upon his brother—for he has the stronger will, although he is the younger—it is strange to me you do not mark his assumption, his arrogance. Not only does he shew respect for none, but lords it as though he knew he were the heir of all.'

'Ah, does he so?' cried Ralph.

'He does, as though his brother were already doomed. This very morning, in the library, he dared to twit him with his morbid feelings, his tainted mind, and angered him with hints at what might happen.'

'Are you *sure*, wife?' inquired Ralph Clyffard, greatly moved. 'How know you this? Beware how you advance this thing, if you have no certain knowledge.'

'I am no talebearer,' returned Mrs Clyffard haughtily. 'I know it myself that so it was. Believe me it is best that these boys were apart.'

'But Rupert would be more dull than ever, Grace.'

'Then give him meet and gay companions; set the old Hall doors wide, and bid your neighbours' sons be friends with the heir of Clyffe.'

'I cannot do it, Grace; you know I cannot do it; and if I could, there is no neighbour's son that is his equal. They would be flatterers all.'

'Then listen, Ralph; I speak this, once for all: the Curse will fall, and it is you who will have called it down. Some companionship Rue must have, or he will mope—some one that will cheer, and yet will sympathise with him—some one with the same tastes, but with a healthier spirit; one he can love, and who will return his love, and above all, one who will render Clyffe—which is now hateful to him—familiar and beloved, as you have made its frowning walls to me, Ralph; and all beneath the eye of you his father, who thus need never lose sight of your beloved son, but will be gladdened day by day to see this blessing work.'

'And in whom is such a paragon—such a flower of friendship to be found?' asked Ralph Clyffard gloomily.

'Where you have found some comfort, or have told me so, dear husband—in a Wife.'

Ralph stared in silence, then—she silent too—observed: 'But Rue is a mere boy, a child.'

'Then let him wait—if you think there is no danger in his waiting. In the meantime, let him engage himself, let the girl reside here—here with me—and her good influence begin at once.'

'But how could this be done, Grace? Who would consent to do it? Would it not arouse suspicion, too—the misfortune of our house being known to all—of the very thing we fear? What girl of fitting birth and station would thus be wooed, or rather would thus woo? You would not have my Rupert demean'—

Ralph stopped and stammered.

'You are thinking of *me*, husband. I am not thinking of myself, but of you and yours. I answer what you are going to say with your own words: "The Clyffards, like the king, confer nobility itself." However, let us talk no more of this at present; only think upon it, there may be no occasion for the remedies you seem to think so desperate. There is no hurry for a month or so.'

'A month!' cried Ralph with agitation.

'Well, say, then, for two months. But remember this: once let the mischief go too far, and although your race were twice as ancient as it is, and your rent-roll ten times as long, no woman, gentle or simple, pure or frail, would consent to link her fate with that of Rupert Clyffard.'

'I will think of it,' groaned the master of Clyffe. 'Leave me now, Grace; I cannot bear even your sweet company.'

She stooped, touching with her lips his stern, unconscious brow, and left the chamber without a word; but on the other side of the closed door she paused, and whispered to her own triumphant face, reflected in the dark and polished oak: 'The doting fool is mine; I have thus sown the seed of much, and it will grow!'

CHAPTER VIII.—MR CLEMENT CARR DINES WITH THE FAMILY.

It has been well said with respect to early rising, that the morning song and the evening song of most persons are very different; promises of being up with the lark, of seeing the sun rise, of having a bathe in the river before breakfast, being often given overnight with an enthusiasm in strange contrast with the loathing with which they are fulfilled. We draw the bill with the utmost readiness since the hour of payment seems so far away; but in the dark dawn of acceptance and liquidation, how we curse our former facility for autograph-writing! Similar, although in inverse proportion, are the alternations of the human mind before and after food. No man, save a fire-eater, can fight well fasting; whereas, after a plentiful repast, if a man is afraid of anything, it were rank flattery to call him coward.

Thus, Mr Clement Carr, whose conduct on his arrival at Clyffe Hall before breakfast we have seen to have been almost pusillanimous, was, after breakfast, in a condition to bid defiance to the powers of at least the Supernatural. He had consumed the half of a large game-pie, besides such kickshaws as trout and marmalade; while in place of tea, he had imbibed the whole of a flagon of old ale, as well as that glass of brandy 'to top up with,' which is termed by would-be dyspeptic persons 'a constable;' and he wanted to know *what* the devil was meant by putting him in the house-keeper's room, and *why* the devil he had not been asked to breakfast with the family, and *how* the

devil it all was. In vain did Mr William Cator endeavour to persuade him that no personal slight had been intentionally put upon him; that it was not the custom in great houses, or, at all events, at Clyffe, for the gentlefolk to take their morning meal together, and that the Master of Clyffe himself broke his fast alone, and even dined alone.

'I shall dine in his dining-room, however,' interrupted Mr Clement with resolution. 'I am not going to be fobbed off with accommodation of this sort twice; not going to be set down at the same table again with a serving-man like you. Fire and furies! am I not own brother to the mistress of the house, and uncle to wash-her-name, the other young woman? O cosh, I dine with the family!'

'When Mr Gideon is here, he does not do so,' returned Cator quietly.

'Well, and what then? Hoosh Gideon? I suppose I can do as I think proper? Ain't I a'— Here Mr Clement Carr had to contend with those sworn foes of all eloquence, and especially of the eloquence of indignation, called the hiccups. 'Ain't I a'— Trout and marmalade always give them me; it's most aströny: nothing but brandy stops them. Wash was I going to say? Ain't I a gentleman bred? Wash the dush do you mean by my sleeping at the village inn? Don't interrupt, sir. O cosh, there's no village inn. I shall shleep in the besh room in this housh.'

'That's the Blue Room, where the ghost is, Mr Clement.'

'Who kairsh for the ghost? I shall shleep in the besh room, whether it's blue, or green, or yellow, or whatever coloursh it is.'

'Well, I dare say Miss Grace herself, as was, will be here presently,' observed Mr William Cator; 'you had better tackle her about it; it's no use bragging to me.'

Accordingly, when the mistress of Clyffe did pay the housekeeper's room a visit, not, however, until the morning had so far advanced that Mr Clement Carr had seen fit to refresh himself with a second meal, and had thereby kept up his courage, he at once 'tackled' that lady upon the lack of personal respect that had been paid to him, Clement Carr, Esquire.

'I am sure I am very sorry, brother,' returned she gravely: 'you have had enough, however, I trust, to eat. I need not ask as to your drinking.'

'What can one do but drinksh,' inquired her relative in a tone half apologetic, half defiant, 'shut up with a serving-man without any conversationsh?'

'What does he want, Cator?' inquired Mrs Clyffard contemptuously.

'He wants to dine in the dining-room, and sleep in the Blue Chamber, ma'am.'

'Besh room in the housh,' muttered Mr Clement.

'You are very easily satisfied, brother; and so it shall be; only, before you dine, you must get sober. The young gentlemen of this family do not drink to excess, and what is more, there will be a young lady at table.'

'Only Mildred Leigh, I supposh.'

'Only Mildred Leigh, sir! May I ask by what right you take upon yourself to speak in that manner of a gentlewoman whom you have never even seen? If this is a specimen of your best manners, you are not fit for the dining-room of Clyffe Hall.'

'But is she not my own neesh, Grace?'

'A misfortune of birth, sir, should not expose any person to rudeness. If you are determined to play the gentleman to-day, see you do not forget your part. Dine with us, sir, and welcome; but keep you away in the meantime from the ale-flagon and the brandy-flask, for—mark me—it would be better for you to drown yourself this day in yonder moat, than to disgrace me and mine at the table of the Clyffards!'

With this unceremonious and conditional invitation to dinner, Mr Clement Carr was fain to put up, although, when he had obtained it, he did not feel by any means comfortable. The social distinctions after which we strain and strive, with a devotion that would win us heaven, if an attempt were directed to that end, are often very disappointing: placed among the gold-fish in a sphere far removed from our own, we do not feel at ease; they are only common carp like ourselves, it is true, but we are conscious of the absence of the auriferous scales from our own backs. They are not lively fish, these gold ones, but their dull steady stare is extremely disconcerting; and if it were not for the after-pleasure of boasting of our experiences in the crystal bowl, we should generally wish ourselves back in our native pond. The fox who observed that the grapes that hung out of the reach of his moderate exertions were sour, made a very just remark, and one which, in my opinion, by no means deserves the ridicule it has universally met with.

Mr Clement Carr made every attempt of which he was capable to persuade the dinner-party at Clyffe that he was born with the auriferous scales, but therein signally failed, for he had not a characteristic in common with gold-fish except their stupidity. He had determined to establish his character as one of the family, by kissing his niece, upon his introduction to Miss Mildred Leigh in the drawing-room; but that young lady met him with so dignified and elaborate a courtesy, that he dared not venture upon such an act of violence. Mr Rupert Clyffard gave him his hand, and uttered a few words of polite welcome in his character of host; but Mr Raymond drew himself up, and bowed, with no more evidence in that cold and stately curve of a desire to shake hands than is exhibited by the Crescent moon. Dinner à la Russe was at that time unknown, but for frigidity and silence, the meal might have been served upon a steppe of Tartary. At first, Mr Clement racked his brains for a topic of conversation, but finding nothing but a Dissertation upon the treatment of the Insane, which it fortunately struck him would be inopportune, he confined himself to asking everybody, one after another, to take wine; a ceremony which in each case froze him to the marrow. From a scarcity of cutlery, or some other sufficient cause, it was the custom at the Dene to retain one's knife and fork throughout the repast, and Clement stuck to his upon the present occasion, notwithstanding the reiterated efforts of the servants to remove them, with the tenacity of an ensign defending his colours. Upon the other hand, being unaccustomed to a napkin, and imagining it to be the property of the attendant, he pressed it upon his acceptance, whenever he came near him; finally, on becoming conscious of both errors, he essayed the first few notes of a whistle, which elsewhere had often stood him in good stead in moments of embarrassment; but catching his sister's basilisk glance fixed sternly upon him, the tune quavered

into silence, and he broke out into a profuse perspiration.

With much greater equanimity, as she had already hinted, could Mrs Clyffard have borne to see her brother taken out dead and dripping, by the heels, from the castle moat, than thus misbehave himself. She dreaded to leave him alone with those young gentlemen (one of them, too, her sworn foe) when his tongue should be loosened by wine; and yet she could scarcely summon him to leave with the ladies, as though he were a little boy. Nor, indeed, would he have obeyed her. He looked for the departure of the hostess and her niece, as the period when he should begin to recompense himself for past restraint, as a gentleman attached to strong liquors, who has taken the Temperance pledge for a limited time, regards the date of his enfranchisement. Nor, when the opportunity arrived, did Mr Clement Carr throw away his chance. Bumper after bumper, bottle after bottle, did he drink, and still did his youthful host and Mr Raymond keep him company, as in duty bound. He had now not the slightest difficulty in selecting a topic of conversation, nor in illustrating the same when found, with much inappropriate grimace and gesticulation. He had really some talent for imitating the lower animals, and by the exercise of this accomplishment, he transformed the stately dining-chamber of Clyffe Hall into a dog-kennel, a nursery for kittens, and a sty tenanted by a sow with a young family. Later in the evening, he arose and caught an imaginary humble-bee in the red damask curtains, and pursued a fictitious mouse upon all-fours, till it found shelter under the sideboard. Never did performer, bent upon making himself agreeable, exhibit before so undemonstrative an audience. Mr Rupert smiled, but it was with polite amazement. Mr Raymond smiled, but it was with something like gratified revenge. Yet there was a reason common to both, though unconfessed by either, which made them regret that their guest's vulgarity was of so very pronounced a type: and it was this same reason which caused the young men to look at one another, with their eyebrows raised, when Mr Clement Carr expressed his opinion (somewhat tardily) that he had had enough of liquor, and that it was time to join the ladies.

'I think it is too late,' observed Rupert quietly, 'to rejoin the ladies to-night; indeed, they have probably left the drawing-room.'

'Stuff a nonshensh,' returned Mr Carr; 'musht 'av a song. I musht get a song out of Miah Mildred; smack her shoulderesh elsh.'

'What!' exclaimed the brothers, starting up with a single impulse, and regarding their guest with flashing eyes.

'My neesh,' exclaimed Mr Carr apologetically; 'my own neesh, you know. Now which of you young vaga—that is, young gentlemen—are sweet upon her? You, Mr Rupert, ish it? or ish it you, Mr Raymond? Ha, ha, I've foundsh you out. Leave me alone for seeing into a'—

'Sir,' interrupted Rupert with dignity, 'these remarks are most offensive, and must not be repeated. You are not in a fit state to enter a drawing-room.'

'Whash a matter with me?' inquired Mr Carr with virtuous warmth.

'You are drunk,' observed Raymond impetuously. 'Do not venture to utter that lady's—any lady's name again within my hearing.'

'Hoity-toity!' replied the guest; 'so it's you who are her sweetheart, is it? Shly dog!'

'What my brother has said,' observed Rupert hastily, 'is what I feel myself, and what every gentleman must feel.' He laid a stress upon the word, such as could not escape the observation even of one less sober than the person he addressed.

'Take you care, Rupert Clyffard,' answered Clement, stung for the nonce into sober rage. 'I have clipped the wings of as fierce bantams as you; you may come some day into my'—

'Your what?' asked a woman's voice, low and clear as the song of a snake-charmer. 'What folly is this you talk, Clement. I am afraid you have been setting these young gentlemen but a bad example. How late you sit over your wine. Mildred has retired to her room, and I should have done likewise, had I not been attracted on my way by what sounded almost like a broil.'

'There was no broil, madam,' observed Raymond haughtily; 'there was only Mr Clement Carr.'

'Whash a matter now?' inquired the latter gentleman, awakened by the mention of his name from a slumber (induced by his sister's harangue) of the probable duration of two seconds, but which had left his mind a blank as to all past transactions. 'Whash a matter, Grace?'

'Follow me, sir, and I will shew you your room,' observed Mrs Clyffard icily. 'It is the Blue Room, is it not?'

'The besh room in the housh,' returned Clement triumphantly, 'whatever coloursh it is.'

She led him up the grand old staircase, ample enough for a hearse-and-four to pass its fellow—along the picture-gallery, silent, but all eyes, and through an echoing passage, where, from out the dim obscure, four footfalls seemed to come forth to meet their own.

'What a long way to come to bed!' observed Clement, greatly sobered by their cold and lonely travel, as well as by certain apprehensions which were gradually making themselves apparent, pushing their heads up like coral-islands above the ocean of wine which he had swallowed. 'And whash my room got three doors for?' Mr Carr was in a condition when objects are apt to multiply themselves to human vision, but he had not seen treble: there really were three doors to his room, although, when he had previously visited it, to make his toilet before dining with the family, he had not observed them. 'Whash the baize-door for?'

'To shut out sound,' returned the lady of Clyffe, in the same sort of tone that the Wolf used when he made the opposite remark to Red Riding-hood—'the better to hear with, my dear. You should not object to that, brother. There are a good many baize-doors at the Dene.'

If the object of this observation was to console, it certainly failed in its effect. With terror-stricken visage, Clement watched his sister light the huge wax-candles upon the dressing-table, and likewise those upon the lofty mantel-piece, until, what with that stately lustre, and the huge wood-fire upon the hearth, the whole apartment looked designed for some dead Clyffard to lie in state in.

'Where do you and your husband sleep, Grace?' inquired he, retaining the cold white hand, which would have bidden him adieu, within his own.

'In the east wing, at the other end of the castle.'

'Oh, indeed; and, by the by, if I should be ill

in the night—I don't feel very well now—and should want Cator, where does *he* sleep, Grace?

'I cannot tell, Clement; but probably over the stable with the grooms. You *would* be lodged in the best bedroom, you know, so you must put up with its little disadvantages. The great folks who have slept here have always had their own attendants about them in the anteroom yonder and in the page's chamber. There is not even a bell except the alarm-bell'—she pointed to a massive silken cord hanging through a round hole in the ceiling, close to the bed-head—'which, should you ring, it would arouse half Craven. Yet even that did not save Sir Thomas. He was found lying stark and stiff here, stabbed to the heart, with his hand outstretched in vain for yonder rope, though ten score of men-at-arms would have answered his summons. Good-night, brother!'

She spoke in a harsh and grating voice, but Clement was very loath to lose the sound of it. He accompanied her through the triple door with officious courtesy.

'I suppose I shall be called in time, Grace!'

'Yes, you will be called—soon enough, doubtless. You had better not come with me any further, or you will lose your way back to your chamber.' She waved her hand, and left him with a firm, unflinching step, which evoked its answering footfall from the other end of the passage—that nearest to the Blue Chamber—as before.

'Good-night!' cried he, his teeth chattering with fear, as he listened with positive anxiety to hear once more her familiar accents.

'Good-night,' answered she sardonically, as she opened the great door which led into the picture-gallery—'good-night, and pleasant dreams.' The quilted door shut behind her with little noise, but her words were repeated by the mocking echoes quite close, as it seemed, to his own ears—'Good-night, and pleasant dreams.'

THE GOUT.

CENTURIES have come and gone since the Greek physician said gout was a disease none but the gods could understand. Generation after generation of Galen's successors have lived and died, and the great *opprobrium medicorum* still awaits its Jenner. Not one of all the masters of the healing art has earned the monument as high as St Paul's, as wide as the Thames, and as lasting as time, which Johnson declared should be erected to the discoverer of a panacea for the gout. Something, though not much, may have been done to mitigate the torment; the fit may be shortened, the pain perhaps alleviated, but at the best, drugs only afford temporary relief. Occasionally, the malady yields to early dietetic and hygienic treatment; but if once it has fixed its fangs on one arrived at man's estate, it must be considered incurable. Shakspeare makes Lord Posthumous in a sore strait say:

Yet am I better

Than one that's sick o' the gout; since he had rather

Groan so in perpetuity, than be cured

By the sure physician—Death;

and the lapse of three hundred years has not weakened the force of the comparison one whit.

The intractability of a disease may always be measured by the variety of remedies propounded for its relief. At one time, doctors sought to conquer gout with acids; at another, they were all for alkalis. Hippocrates, and in later times, Sir W. Temple, advocated cauterisation, or burning with crude flax; while water was the fashionable agent fifty years ago. When Elizabeth's Lord Burleigh was laid up with the gout, the Archbishop of Armagh besought him to prove the efficacy of a remedy he had brought out of Dutchland; and if it was as effectual as it certainly was nasty, the Lord Treasurer ought never to have complained again. Here is the recipe: 'Take two spaniel whelps of two days old, scald them, and cause the entrails to be taken out, but wash them not. Take four ounces brimstone, four ounces turpentine, one ounce spermaceti, a handful of nettles, and a quantity of oil of balm, and put all the aforesaid in them stamped, and serve them up, and roast them, and take the drops, and anoint you where your grief is.' Laud recommended Strafford to run up and down in the dew. Cardinal Zinzendorf bathed his legs every morning in pig's blood. Horace Walpole was advised to cut his nails in hot water, but found more benefit from his bootikens and a decoction of dock-roots. A humorous victim to the 'friendly earnest of fourscore,' well-nigh pestered to death by the advice of sympathising friends, made a note of all their infallible recipes, and found that, to insure a cure, he must dose himself with colchicum, carbonate of soda, buckbean tea, ether, sulphur, magnesia, and gin; and apply cabbage-leaves, treacle, castor-oil, leeches, and steam to his troubled members, after rubbing them well with oil of swallows, mustard, vinegar, and vitriol. Then, if he refrained from vegetables, and gorged himself with cucumbers and onions, ate no meat, and lived generously, avoided wines and spirits, and took abundance of good brandy and rum, wrapped himself in flannel, and went lightly clothed, used a flesh-brush, and avoided touching the affected parts, and carried a magnet in his one pocket, and a potato in another, he might defy the gout, and live happy ever afterwards; but with the obstinacy peculiar to gouty subjects, this invalid with many friends said, as a modern statesman said when a wine-merchant recommended his cheap claret as a panacea: 'I prefer the gout.'

Gout was once thought pre-eminently aristocratic; a rich man without the gout is one of Rosalind's examples of whom time ambles withal. Dr Sydenham consoled himself with the reflection, that gout killed more rich than poor, more wise than simple. 'Great kings, emperors, generals, admirals, and philosophers have all died of the gout. Hereby nature shews her impartiality, since those whom she favours in one way she afflicts in another.' If this was more than a half-truth in Sydenham's day, it is no longer so. Gout has become more democratic, and favours all classes with his visits. Something may be owing to the change in the habits of the upper classes; gentlemen do not now get drunk upon port and sherry, powerful provocatives of gout. Spirit-drinkers are not liable to it, but excessive indulgence in strong malt liquors is one of the surest methods of obtaining an introduction to this enemy of mankind; and the worst of it is, gout is not content with

punishing the original offender, but wreaks its vengeance upon his descendants. Dr Garrod was consulted by a patient, who told him that, for upwards of four hundred years, the gout had laid hold of the representative of his family as soon as ever he came into possession of the estate. Dr Cullen was of opinion that all gout was hereditary, so that he must have believed the tradition that Adam died of hereditary gout. Modern authorities do not go quite so far, but they agree that in three out-of-five cases, gout has been inherited. No wonder, then, that Horace Walpole grumbled at becoming its victim, spite of his virtue and leanness. After comically describing himself as wrapped in flannels like the picture of a Morocco ambassador, he says: 'If either my father or mother had had it, I should not dislike it so much. I am herald enough to approve it, if descended genealogically; but it is an absolute upstart in me, and what is more provoking, I had trusted to my great abstinence for keeping me from it; but thus it is. If I had any gentleman-like virtue, as patriotism or loyalty, I might have got something by them; I had nothing but that beggarly virtue temperance, and she had not interest enough to keep me from a fit of the gout. Another plague is, that everybody that ever knew anybody that had it, is so good as to come with advice, and direct me how to manage it; that is, how to continue to have it for a great many years.'

Where a predisposition for gout exists, a fit may be induced by the most contradictory causes. One man obtains it from a glass of port; another, with a draught of lemonade; while a glass of ale will suffice with a third. Kingale's pet north-east wind excites it in some cases; a mathematical problem has been known to produce it; and it has often followed from sudden cold, the drawing of a tooth, or loss of blood. It is this uncertainty that baffles medical art; what may cure in one case, may kill in another. A victim who was racked with torture by a glass of wine, found peace in a glass of verjuice; a water-drinking lawyer found succour in wine; while a wine-bibbing brother obtained relief from milk. A German innkeeper was cured by having his feet nailed to a block; a Genevan, by a mad-woman rushing into his room, and knocking his feet together; and Hone tells us how a mad bull gave chase to a gouty old gentleman, and frightened his malady away for ever.

In the belief that the gout suffered no rival disease near its throne, a bishop once vainly offered a thousand pounds to any one who could put him in the way of having a fit. It was also popularly supposed to lengthen life, and it is true enough that its subjects very often attain to great age in spite of its attacks. M. Quartier, physician to the Duke of Bouillon, had a sixty years' acquaintanceship with the gout, yet at ninety he walked finally, and did not die till he was a hundred years old to the very hour. Nor are living examples wanting of the vigour men may retain to advanced age, to whom the gout is a regular visitor.

One Misaurus wrote a strange little book in Honour of the Gout, with the avowed object of proving that it was a blessing for which mankind could not be thankful enough. He sets about his difficult task so heartily, that it is somewhat difficult to guess whether he is serious or satirical; and the reader is in doubt whether he should laugh at or with him. After vindicating the antiquity of his subject, as something younger

than the fall of Adam, sent down from heaven mercifully to lengthen the life forfeited by man's transgression, our author proceeds to give six good reasons why gout should be ranked among the blessings of earth. Firstly, it gives a man pain without danger. Secondly, it is no constant companion, but allows its friends lucid intervals, in which they experience a delicious enjoyment of health, unknown to those who pass through life without an ailment. Thirdly, it is a perpetual weather-guide, ever ready for use, in comparison with which your barometers and thermometers are worthless instruments; and our gout-defender predicts that, if its signs are properly studied, the time would come when no shipowner would consider his vessel safe unless commanded by a gouty captain. Fourthly and fifthly, gouty people are unplagued with headaches, and invulnerable to fever; and lastly, gout is incurable. P. M. does not go so far as to assert that gout will render its possessors actually immortal, although it often keeps a man alive till all his friends are weary of him; but he maintains that if Paracelsus had the power of making men proof against the shafts of death, his secret consisted in inoculating them with gout. As to the objection, that gouty people do die, he answers that they do so because they are ignorant fools, who do not know when they are well off, but must needs be curing the gout, and therefore deal with Death's factor, the physician. 'Let every one bear his own burden; the gout has nothing to do with the carnage of the doctor.'

If we could trust the Registrar-general's Reports, gout is not answerable for more than one death in every seventeen hundred; but the assurance companies reckon the fatality of the disease at a much higher rate, placing it among their worst enemies. Sir B. Brodie has left it on record that a large proportion of patients coming to him with so-called local diseases, were really suffering from the influence of gout on the system, although free from anything which commonly passes for gout. Heat seems to be antagonistic to this mysterious disease; it is far oftener met with in temperate than in warm climates, and prevails more in spring and autumn than during the hot summer months; but diet seems to have more to do with gout than anything else, and as malt liquor stands first on the black list of gout-producers, we fear the disease will never be rare in England.

COUNTRY PLEASURES.

In Paradise, amid the hay,
I doze a summer hour away;
Or lying down beside the corn,
I hear that angel of the morn,

The new-flown lark, with tufted crest,
Spring from his little lowly nest,
Then to the bluest heaven rising,
All Eden with his song surprising.

Or lying couched, 'mid flowers and grass,
I let the burning noontide pass,
Watching the poppies fade away,
In sorrow for the closing day.